Achieving Maximum Potential
July 2017 Newsletter

Note from the Facilitators

AMP has a lot of cool things happening across the state, and we just want to spread the awesomeness around. Welcome to our first statewide newsletter! Since this is our pilot issue, it’s a bit later in the month than you should usually expect it, but you’ll get a glimpse of what to expect in future issues. Inside you’ll find information on all of our councils and what they’re doing for July, a word on AMP Camp from this year, and a few things that have been happening in different parts of Iowa. If you want to subscribe to our newsletter each month or have something which you’d like to submit, please contact your local facilitator—we’re especially looking for submissions from our youth, after all, they’re what this is all about!

Youth Poem:
Allowed to Ask!

Am I allowed  
To cry in front  
Of you?  
Can I share with  
You my deepest fears,  
My darkest secrets?  
If I ask you to wait,  
To stop,  
Will you respect me  
And not walk away?  
Will you stay and believe  
In me?  
Can I rely on you  
To be my strength,  
My fortress?  
Am I allowed to  
Ask these things of you?  
Is it weakness to doubt, to feel fear?  
Can I trust you  
And feel safe?  
Can I run to you and  
Be held by arms I  
Don’t know?  
Would you pull  
Away if I told  
You how I really felt?  
Am I allowed to  
Ask these things  
Of you?

Cos…  
You’re allowed  
To cry in front of me!  
You can share your  
Deepest fears, your darkest secrets  
With me! You can  
Tell me to stop,  
To wait! I’ll respect  
You and won’t walk  
Away! I’ll stay and believe  
In you! You can rely on me  
To be your strength, your fortress!  
You’re allowed to  
Ask these things of me!  
It isn’t weakness  
To doubt, to fear! You can trust me  
And feel safe! You can run to me  
And I’ll hold you in  
These arms you haven’t  
Come to know! I won’t  
Pull away if  
You told me how  
You really felt! You are  
Allowed to ask  
These things of me  
Because I love you  
For you!!

-Cristen

IOWA’S WILDEST ADVENTURE

Trip to Blank Park Zoo (Des Moines)  
Tuesday, July 18, 2017  
10 am—2 pm

Variety and Blank Park Zoo would like to invite you to visit all your friends in the animal kingdom! Zoo Day is a free day at the Zoo for the children in which we serve: underprivileged, at-risk, and special needs children as well as their chaperones. There are still some tickets available, but you must contact your facilitator immediately to ensure a spot.

A few years ago, Iowa College Aid released the first video in the “Education Empowers” series, interviews with students on issues facing students who are making the transition to college from high school. Students of lower income, students of color and first generation students (those students who are the first in their family to continue into higher education) often find themselves unprepared for many of the changes that await them in college.

They interviewed professionals who faced many of those issues to provide insight that can help students prepare and succeed in college. College is possible and we’re here to help!

To view the video, please visit:
https://youtu.be/fiuv5jVcx0M?t=1
AMP Activities Across the State

**Ames**
Facilitator: Terri Bailey  
Email: tbailey@yss.org  
Phone: 515.249.7089
Facilitator: Julie Holscher  
Email: jholscher@yss.org  
Phone: 515.291.0689

Meets @ Youth & Shelter Services Youth Activity Center on Third Floor (420 Kellogg Ave., Ames)

**Monday 7.3.17 4 PM—6 PM:** Food @ First—market (need boys to volunteer)

**Thursday 7.6.17 5:30 PM—7:30 PM:** Food @ First—meal (need girls to volunteer)

**Thursday 7.13.17 6:30 PM-8 PM:** Chris Scott from YSS will help us with job interview skills!

**Monday 7.17.17 4 PM—6 PM:** Food @ First—market (need boys to volunteer)

**Tuesday 7.18.17 10 AM—2 PM:** Variety Zoo Day at the Blank Park Zoo in DSM!

**Thursday 7.20.17 5:30 PM—7:30 PM:** Food @ First—meal (need girls to volunteer)

**Thursday 7.27.17 6:30 PM—8 PM:** Olivia Samples from YSS

**Burlington**
Facilitator: Debbie Schmidt  
Email: debraschmidt319@gmail.com  
Phone: 260.241.1127

Meets @ Christamore Family Treatment Center (905 South Iris, Mt Pleasant)

**Thursday 7.13.17 6:30 PM:** Human Trafficking Presenter: Ruth Buckels

**Thursday 7.27.17 6:30 PM:** Caring Adults and Caring Communities

**Cedar Rapids**
Facilitator: Shelby Holsapple  
Email: shosapple@foundation2.org  
Phone: 319.651.0688

Next meeting: Thursday 7.27.17 (Details to be announced.)

**Council Bluffs**
Facilitator: Coming soon!

**Davenport**
Facilitator: Hannah May  
Email: mayhannah.davenportamp@gmail.com  
Phone: 815.768.9505

**Thursday 7.6.17 (Details to be announced.)**

**Thursday 7.20.17 (Details to be announced.)**

**Des Moines**
Facilitator: Yahaira Espinosa  
Email: yaya.xo4997@gmail.com  
Phone: 515.943.5885

**Tuesday 7.11.17 6 PM—8 PM (Lutheran Church of Hope 925 Jordan Creek Parkway, West Des Moines):** Elizabeth Wolfe from Planned Parenthood of the Heartland is our guest speaker! She will have activities around communication with romantic partners and delaying becoming a parent.

**Tuesday 7.18.17 10 AM—2 PM:** Join us at the Blank Park Zoo (lunch is included)

**Des Moines Mobile**
Facilitator: Yahaira Espinosa  
Email: yaya.xo4997@gmail.com  
Phone: 515.943.5885
Dubuque
Facilitator: Indigo Channing  
Email: jessica.perry@hillcrest-fs.org  
Phone: 563.542.9736

Tuesday 7.11.17 4:30 PM—9:30 PM: Trip to visit Waterloo Council
Thursday 7.13.17 6 PM—8 PM: Community Dubuque Game Night @ The Smokestack (62 East 7th St., Dubuque)
Tuesday 7.18.17 6 AM—6 PM: Trip to Blank Park Zoo (Des Moines)
Wednesday 7.19.17 11 AM—12 PM: Marshallese Culture: Suzie Stroud @ AY McDonald Fellowship Hall in the Hadley Chapel (Hillcrest Family Services Main Campus, 2005 Asbury Rd., Dubuque)
Tuesday 7.25.17 6 PM—8 PM: Reviewing last year’s legislative agenda @ AY McDonald Fellowship Hall in the Hadley Chapel (Hillcrest Family Services Main Campus, 2005 Asbury Rd., Dubuque)

Sunday 7.31.17 2 PM—3:30 PM (Roshek’s 700 Locust St., Dubuque): Please join us for our second annual Walk to Set Free! This year’s event will coincide with the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. Take a stand against modern day slavery both globally and here in our community. This is a silent, single file walk. Please wear black. Informational booths will be available. You can also purchase Set Free t-shirts and jewelry.

Eldora State Training School
Facilitator: Paul McNamara  
Email: pmcnamara@yss.org  
Phone: 319.404.6356
Web: http://www.ampiowa.org/en/amp_near_you/eldora_sts_amp/

Saturdays in July: Crossfit—this physically and mentally challenges and toughens kids up. For them to get through it they have to be disciplined, work as a team and encourage each other. Also builds character.
I have a leadership reaction meeting that I am conducting. The group has to work as a team to get from point A to point B overcoming obstacles that I set in place. Based off military operations with small unit leadership. Kind of like an obstacle course but on a lower level. Hopefully, fun and challenging.

Fort Dodge
Facilitator: Cassie Johnson  
Email: cjohnson.ysc@frontier.com  
Phone: 515.570.4867
Facilitator: Kate Cardenas  
Email: office.ysc@frontier.com
Web: http://www.ampiowa.org/en/amp_near_you/fort_dodge_amp/

Monday 7.10.17 5:30 PM—7 PM (@ Shelter 301 Ave M West, Fort Dodge): I will be doing a couple of team building exercises with the youth, and we are going to go over our schedule for the summer.
Tuesday 7.18.17: Trip to Blank Park Zoo (Des Moines)
Monday 7.24.17 5:30 PM—7 PM (Details to be announced.)

Marshalltown
Facilitator: Alyson Hicks  
Email: Mtownamp@hotmail.com  
Phone: 641.751.1776
Web: http://www.ampiowa.org/en/amp_near_you/marshalltown_amp/

Tuesday 7.18.17 6 PM—8 PM (YSS of Marshall County @ 11 E. State St., Marshalltown): We are making Thank-yous for our local PD.

Mason City
Facilitator:  
Web: http://www.ampiowa.org/en/amp_near_you/mason_city_amp/

Ottumwa
Facilitator: Holly Dommer  
Email: hdommer@ahfa.org  
Phone: 641.682.3449
Web: http://www.ampiowa.org/en/amp_near_you/ottumwa_amp/

Sioux City
Facilitator: Jen Schaper  
Email: ischaper@childrenssquare.org  
Phone: 712.255.9061
Web: http://www.ampiowa.org/en/amp_near_you/sioux_city_amp/
Meeting details to be announced.
AMP Activities Across the State (cont.)

Waterloo
Facilitator: Jessica (Perry) Christman  Email: jperrychristman@gmail.com
Phone: 515.451.4233
Web: http://www.ampiowa.org/en/amp_near_you/waterloo_amp/
Meets @ Grace Lutheran Church (1024 West 8th St., Waterloo)
Tuesday 7.11.17 6:30 PM—8 PM  Author and Life Resiliency Instructor Nicolette Brink
Tuesday 7.25.17 6:30 PM—8 PM  Carrie Snell with Job Corps

The AMP Partnership of Iowa Foster Care Youth Councils is a collaboration of 10 organizations led by YSS. The Iowa Department of Human Services is the primary grant funder for AMP, with donations and local community support supplementing local youth AMP councils.

The Partnership includes: American Home Finding Association (Ottumwa Council), Children’s Square USA (Council Bluffs & Sioux City Councils), Foundation 2 (Cedar Rapids Council), Four Oaks (Waterloo Council), Francis Lauer, a YSS organization (Mason City Council), Youth Shelter Care of North Central Iowa (Fort Dodge Council), YSS (Ames, Marshalltown, & Davenport Councils), Iowa Homeless Youth Centers, a YSS organization (Des Moines Council), Hillcrest Family Services (Dubuque Council), and Young House Family Services (Burlington Council).

The partnership networks with other stakeholders, including but not limited to, the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parent Association, Iowa KidsNet, the Iowa Aftercare Services Network, Juvenile Court Services, as well as both governmental and private agency service providers.
Our fifth year of Variety AMP Camp led us to a new camp in southern Iowa; Forest Lake Camp. This new camp offered campers some key elements we were missing such as swimming, fishing, paddle boats and canoes! Close to the campgrounds AMP youth enjoyed learning about horses at Victory Ranch. The horse/human relationship is vital to caring for the animal and taught youth about safety, respect and trust. How you act with a horse is much like interactions with other people! Several guest speakers presented to AMP campers: a fire & rescue crew educated youth on emergency situations, how to keep calm, let campers try on their gear and played water games with the fire hose. Youth played team building games, AMP Survivor, viewed the stars in the mobile planetarium and told their story through poetry. Campers learned about the dangers of human trafficking, how to stay safe and how to recognize trafficking in their community. Teens learned about transition planning, supports they can use as they age out of care, college scholarships and the application process plus took a tour of Job Corp in Ottumwa. AMP is starting collaboration with Job Corp and Indian Hills Community College this fall and eight youth will be a part of this pilot project. Living and attending training at Job Corp then transferring to Indian Hills, if they choose, to complete their career choice. The best part of Variety AMP Camp is making friends and “adding leaves to our family tree”. Thirty youth from fifteen AMP Councils across Iowa came to camp for seven days and became part of the AMP family! Eight mentors were role models for AMP campers; they told youth their personal stories of hope, shared their struggles and showed campers that foster teens can be successful! Variety AMP Camp changed lives! Iowa’s youth are resilient and headed for a bright future!
Join us for the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa’s
Young Leaders Collaborative

If you could change one thing about foster care – what would it be?
Your insights and ideas matter! As a youth who has experienced foster care, you can help make a difference in the Iowa child welfare system.

Get a chance to:
► Meet with other young people from around the state
► Have fun brainstorming and sharing ideas to improve foster care in Iowa
► Develop an advocacy agenda to generate real change!

Interested?
RSVP to save your seat! Contact Robert at ribens@ypi.org or 515-727-4220 by July 14, 2017.

Where
Urbandale Library
3520 86th St
Urbandale, IA 50322

When
Saturday, July 22, 2017
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Great giveaways!!
Lunch and snacks provided

Youth Policy Institute of Iowa
515.727.4220 • www.ypi.org
JOIN US!
This FREE conference is specifically designed for parents of children with mental health issues. Participants will leave with increased knowledge and awareness of pediatric behavior health issues, resources available, and skills and strategies to navigate the challenges of behavioral health. While the conference is entirely free to parents, we ask that persons wishing to attend pre-register so that we have enough space, food, and childcare available. Professionals and pre-professional students are only $10. Donations are welcome and allow for us to continue to maximize our efforts across the state.

WHERE & WHEN
- September 9th 9am-3:20pm
- Boy Scout Mid Council Iowa Headquarters
- 6123 Scout Trail, Des Moines, IA 50321 (off of 63rd Street)
- Free pizza lunch will be provided!

TOPICS
- medicine management
- caregiver wellness
- transitioning to adulthood
- crisis management
- IEP's/504 plans and parent rights
- relationship building
- suicide prevention
- legislative action
- mental health and LGBTQ youth
- AND MUCH MORE!

REGISTER!
Those interested in sponsoring an expo table and all other questions may contact Jennifer Ulle-Wells at info@pleasepassthelove.org.

To register, visit pleasepassthelove.com!

Questions?
Contact us at info@pleasepassthelove.org

Please Pass the Love is committed to increasing school-based mental health supports to improve the quality of life and educational opportunities for children, families, and educators as well as offer culturally responsive comprehensive services and evidence-based supports to school systems. We strive to bridge positive relationships between the educational and mental health communities to more effectively prevent and address mental health issues for our children and adolescents throughout the state of Iowa.
You may be aware, the All Iowa Opportunity Foster Care Grant will not exist for the 2017-2018 school year. However, students in foster care have been applying for the 2017-18 All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship instead. ETV is unchanged.

Applications for ETV and the All Iowa Scholarship have been received or (for All Iowa Foster Care Grant applications) are automatically being converted into an application for the All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship at this time; therefore, no additional action is needed from students/applicants. College Aid will contact applicants directly if they need something.

Attached is a "side by side" All Iowa changes document that went out a month or so ago.

Finally, we want to inform you that Tonia will not be returning to her position. DHS and Iowa College Aid are considering whether we are able to fill the position. Because of the All Iowa changes, it may not be feasible. We understand youth and others need a point of contact, so no matter what, we'll make sure we have someone to answer program and student level questions.

If students/applicants or others have questions about the documents attached, changes to the funds, or anything specific to a current application, they can call Iowa College Aid at 1-877-272-4456 option 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship</th>
<th>All Iowa Opportunity Foster Care Grant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Eligibility</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school completion</td>
<td>Requires a high school or eligible homeschool diploma, or a high school equivalency diploma. No high school GPA requirement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Award</td>
<td>Must attend college for the first time AND receive the scholarship within two years of high school graduation or completion of a high school equivalency program. [Recipients of the All Iowa Opportunity Foster Care Grant during the 2016-17 academic year are exempt from this requirement.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Award renewal</td>
<td>Students can receive up to 8 full-time or 16 part-time semesters of continuous enrollment (summer terms are not considered in the continuous enrollment criteria). Funding ends at age 24.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligible Program of Study</td>
<td>Must enroll in a program of study that is eligible for Federal Student Aid (Title IV eligible program of study) and that leads to an undergraduate degree, diploma, or certificate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment Status</td>
<td>Must enroll in at least 3 credit hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Family Contribution</td>
<td>Recipients must have EFCs at or below the average Regent tuition and fee rate (2017-18 = $8,550)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Award</td>
<td>2017-18: Full-time students can receive up to $4,275 per year. Part-time awards are prorated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of eligible foster care student</td>
<td>In a licensed foster care placement under a court order as described in Iowa Code chapter 232 under the care and custody of the Department of Human Services or Juvenile Court Services on the date the youth reached the age of 18 or during the 30 calendar days before or after that date; (cont. next page)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Under court order under Iowa Code chapter 232 to live with a relative or other suitable person on the date the youth reached the age of 18 or during the 30 calendar days before or after that date;

In a licensed foster care placement under an order entered under Iowa Code chapter 232 prior to being legally adopted after reaching the age of 16, or,

In the State Training School or the Iowa Juvenile Home under court order under Iowa Code chapter 232 under the care and custody of the Department of Human Services on the date the youth reached the age of 18 or during the 30 calendar days before or after that date.

<table>
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<th>Institution Eligibility</th>
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<th>Application/Awarding Process</th>
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<tr>
<td>Required Application(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Priority Criteria</td>
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<td>Awarding Process</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
AMP involves young people as advocates for themselves and as a voice for system-level improvements in child welfare policies and practices. Through supportive productive partnerships with adults, youth are authoritative advocates for making foster care more responsive and effective.

Members of AMP also encourage others to open their homes to teens in foster care, or to adopt. AMP youth educate legislators, child welfare professionals, juvenile court representatives, foster parents and the public about foster care and adoption from a youth perspective.

We’re looking for contributions for our newsletter from AMP youth around the state.

Do you have an article, poem, picture, or anything else that you’d like to share with us?

Contact your area facilitator to submit it!

Facilitator Spotlight: Cedar Rapids

Hello everyone! My name is Shelby Holsapple and I’m super excited to be the Cedar Rapids AMP facilitator. I think AMP is such an amazing program and I am blessed to be a part of it. After I graduated college with my bachelors degree I moved to Iowa and started working for Foundation2 Youth Shelter. That was where I was introduced to AMP for the first time. After working at the shelter for about a year I accepted a new position within Foundation2 and now have the honor of facilitating the Cedar Rapids council. I’m excited for this year and hope to see the council grow even more! I love that this organization keeps youth involved with what happens in their lives. Ownership is important! The mission statement that I live by is to help youth through service and advocacy so that they may have a successful life with meaning and purpose.

For more information contact:
Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP)
YSS
125 South 3rd Street
Ames, Iowa 50010
P 515.233.2250
EXT. 4575
www.ampiowa.org
Facebook: Achieving Maximum Potential - AMP (Group)

What is AMP?
AMP is a youth-driven, statewide group that seeks to unleash the full potential for personal growth among foster and adoptive children in Iowa. AMP offers leadership opportunities, service learning projects, speaking opportunities, and educational/vocational assistance. Amp also provides the life skills youth need to become self-sufficient, independent adults.

WHO CAN COME?
Any youth between 13 and 21 can attend an AMP meeting if they have been placed out of the home at some point in their life. They could have been in foster care, relative care, residential, group home, or a shelter. If you have any questions, please contact your local facilitator.

GET INVOLVED
Whether you are able to offer an hour, afternoon, or perhaps a lifetime, AMP can benefit from your time, talents and treasures.

- Allow us to speak at your event: AMP youth have a compelling story to share, and would welcome the opportunity to speak at your next luncheon, meeting or event.
- Share a skill, talent or hobby: The majority of youth who reach adulthood while in foster care do not get the chance to develop critical life skills that enable others their age to succeed. Please consider sharing your skills and knowledge with our youth.
- Donate a service or product: Teens leaving foster care have the same needs as others their age, as they move toward living independently. Furnishings, linens, personal hygiene products, cleaning supplies, towels, kitchen supplies, etc. are welcomed by donors to help AMP youth succeed.
- Provide financial support: Visit ampiowa.org to make a secure online donation to AMP’s lead organization, YSS. You can also mail your contribution via check to: YSS 420 Kellogg Avenue, Ames, Iowa 50010. Please make your check out to YSS and note “AMP” in the memo line. To ensure your financial support is allocated to the AMP council of your choice, also include the location in the memo line.

A program of the AMP Partnership of Iowa Foster Youth Councils